



# NEWSLETTER



NOVEMBER 2013 [www.olddux.org](http://www.olddux.org) Compiled by LARRY CROSS

Dear Members

I trust that you are all keeping as well as you can be having had your annual F.F.I - (Flu Jab) and bracing yourselves for the coming season. Herewith November's newsletter with a little festive flavour to take us into December.

As a starter I would like to bring to your attention a few items I found worthy of note.

During the Golden Age of Aviation, In 1933 Lord Clydesdale piloted the first flight over Mount Everest, Wiley Post was first to fly solo round the world and the ground breaking movie King Kong was made. Petrol was 1s.5½d gallon (1s.6p Litre) 1lb of Tea was 1s.9p (9p) and a pint of beer was 7d. (3p)

Famous people born include, Joan Collins, Michael Caine, Jayne Mansfield, Larry Cross and Bobby Robson and England won the Ashes 4 - 1

On the 5<sup>th</sup> October the day dawned bright and sunny and Doreen and I set off for Duxford, arriving at the Red Lion in nice time for lunch. How they knew it was my birthday I don't know but there was the Red Carpet all laid out, WoW ! Doreen reckoned it was for a wedding reception, silly girl !

Not many moons ago the place would have been buzzing with Old Dux members but today there was only one, Pete Gibbard, at the bar, my old mate from 65Sqn days. More friends arrived later and we booked a table for 10 for our evening meal. The meals were excellent and a jolly good evening was had by all ...but no cake, ahhh ! See photos on the website.

Sunday was another warm sunny day and before setting off for the airfield members enjoyed a superb carvery, in attendance was Ian Swindale acting Duty Officer. As you might image it was quite busy on such a lovely day as we made our way to the AirSpace Hangar for the meeting.

## October Meeting

There was no problems with the keys this time and the meeting got under way at around 14.00hrs . As is the norm, Bob opened by greeting everyone then requesting a two minutes silence for members who have gone before. New members and those attending for the first time were asked to reveal themselves if you'll pardon the expression. Keith Gunnell answered the call and gave a good account of not only his time at Duxford but also most of his RAF career.

John Blake raised the question of Associate Membership and suggested that to increase the membership the criteria for joining should be relaxed. Bob reminded him that to retain the associations unique standing any prospective new member must have a genuine affinity with Duxford and be approved by committee.

## 2014 Annual Dinner and AGM

There was no vote necessary to decide the date of the Annual Dinner as the only date available at the Red Lion was May 10<sup>th</sup>. This being due to the growing popularity as a wedding venue.

The AGM will of course follow on Sunday the 11th May 2014

Ian Swindale took the floor to announce the passing of Mrs Fay Thornally as we knew her, widow of Flt/Lt Gerry Thornally tragically killed in May 1960. Ian recalled that, days prior to the accident he had cause to 'have words' with Gerry during a session of dinghy drill at Sawston Baths. This laid heavily with Ian after the accident and has since placed a poppy on Gerry's grave in Whittlesford Churchyard every year.

## Presentation by Esther Blaine, Publicity Officer for I.W.M.

Esther was invited to attend our October meeting to give us an insight as to what her duties included and this she did with great aplomb. She spoke engagingly for at least twenty minutes and held us awestruck at the range and complexity of her job.

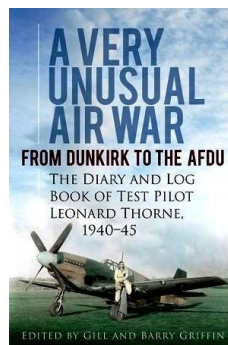
Considering the number of events taking place throughout the Duxford year, the publicity required to promote them and dealing with the press she is indeed a very busy lady.

It could be said that the main events are the Air Shows involving all departments ensuring that visitors have a day to remember and to maintain IWM Duxford's position as the best-preserved Second World War airfield in Europe. Every year around 600 journalists, reviewers and broadcasters are accredited in order to review Duxford's Air Shows.

Duxford is available for meetings, conferences, product launches, and is also regularly used for commercial filming and photo shoots.

Esther is hoping to see us all again at the AGM next May but in between times would love to hear from anyone with an interesting story and photographs (of Duxford). Tel: 01223 499320 [eblaine@iwm.org.uk](mailto:eblaine@iwm.org.uk)

## REVIEW



Gill and husband Barry Griffiths and available from Amazon at £8.25 Hardcover.

Len Thorne joined the RAF in May 1940. After two hectic tours of operational duty as a fighter pilot (including some desperately dangerous low-level flying at Dunkirk) he was posted to AFDU (Air Fighting Development Unit) at Duxford and remained with the AFDU as a test pilot for the rest of the war. He flew both Allied and captured enemy aircraft. The book is edited by his daughter

To bring the meeting to a close on a happy note, Nobby Clark was in fine fettle and gave his rendering of an Irish tale, always hilarious.

## **.Remembrance Sunday November 10th**

Under a clear blue Duxford sky sixteen Old Dux veterans and some family members joined several thousand visitors to pay their respects. Les Millgate gave an excellent interview from the roof of the control tower, in which apart from outlining the role of the ODA, he gave first hand knowledge of life at Duxford during the Cold War period of the fifties. He graphically described the experiences of all who served in many capacities, emphasising that throughout its time as an operational Royal Air Force station, it was considered by all to be a happy posting.

The Service of Remembrance was held in Airspace, where in addition to the five hundred seated, the rest of the auditorium, balconies and staircases were packed to near capacity. The service was opened with a greeting from Richard Ashton, Director of IWM. He welcomed guests including "Veterans of the Old Dux Association" and the service was conducted by the Rev. Dr Jessica Martin. Les Millgate laid the wreath on our behalf with great dignity along with twelve other significant organisations.



Those attending from Left.

Les Gange, Ann Brinkley, Allan

and Jenny McRae, Helen Millgate, Anne Gange, Mike Davis, Kerris and Colin Denley.

Standing at rear Mike Scrivener Les Millgate and Stan Dell. Also Helen Milne and family (Middle) Louise, Stephen and Dominic.

*More pictures can be seen on web site Gallery*

The committee would like to express their thanks to Les Millgate for his excellent PR role and of laying the wreath on our behalf, to Allan McRae who designed and produced the centre piece and tribute card for the wreath, and to Colin and Kerris Denley who supplied the wreath and very kindly donated the cost of £35 to the ODA funds.

Everyone agreed that it was an excellent day of remembrance, very well organised and carried through by IWM staff and volunteers. We once again wish to express our thanks to Richard Ashton and Steven Woolford, and Esther Blaine and Lucy Munn who so generously give us their support.

### **Bob Way- Founder Member.**

Having had no response from our calls and letters to contact Bob, we persisted and did eventually speak to Bob's wife Jean, who is also under community care. She was not at all coherent and unsure of Bob's whereabouts but eventually gave us the details of the care home where he was. We learned that Bob is quite well in himself but does not know or recognise anyone. He does however enjoy looking at photographs of aircraft. Anne Gange contacted Ken Cousens his mate from 64Sqn days to relay the news who kindly sent a stack of photographs to me which I forwarded on with a good wishes card. (on the web site) I agreed to continue sending him the newsletter providing that it would be read to him and this they agreed to do. L.C.

### **Advance news on the annual dinner from our secretary Anne Gange**

The dinner will be held at The Red Lion on Saturday 10th May 2014.

There will be a three course dinner with the choice of two courses of starter, main and dessert.

The price is £27. 50 - £2.50 less than last year.

The menu will be published with the application form in the spring - at this point it will be necessary to make one selection for each course.

The management of the Red Lion are very aware of our dissatisfaction with last years meal and are really working to restore our trust in them. It must also be said that several members had an impromptu dinner the evening before the October meeting, which was excellent in quality of food and service.

As this coincided with a wedding for sixty guests it bodes well for May.

The cost of accommodation at both the Red Lion and the Holiday Inn is £63 for a double room and £53 for a single, and for those who chose to stay the night before, the rate will be the same. While more details will be advertised in the Spring Newsletter, now is the time to note the date in your shiny new calendar!



## Welcome Sallie and Mike Blundell

In August 2013, Sallie Blundell contacted Carl Warner, the Research and Information manager at IWM Duxford to tell him she and her husband Mike planned to visit Duxford for the first time since they had met there 54 years before. Consequently, Carl invited them to join him as his guests and be interviewed by him about their time there.

In 1958, having completed his time as a boy entrant at RAF St Athan, eighteen year old Mike Blundell was posted to 64 Squadron, Duxford as an airframe fitter on Javelin fighters. A year later just before her eighteenth birthday LACW Sallie Sanderson arrived to start duties as an operations clerk in Air Traffic Control. Little did they know, Duxford was where they would meet, destined to spend the rest of their lives together. Was there something special about RAF Duxford that many couples who met there would do the same?

Duxford was a happy, close knit camp where the authorities had a strong responsibility for the many young people in their charge. All the airwomen were single and the ratio of males to females was very high. Weekends were mainly spent on camp, either on duty or, when off duty, being very much thrown together



owing to the lack of opportunities to escape camp with very few airmen owning cars and sparse public transport. Apart from the sports facilities, much off duty time was spent in the NAAFI or nearby Bette's Cafe, both having Juke boxes much enjoyed by the younger ranks., Mike joined a group of pals who had formed a rock and roll band and there were many local pubs who coped well with the raucous behaviour of some. Mike and Sallie were aware of each other around camp but met properly at The Green Man Thriplow a popular place to get together for birthday celebrations. These involved putting ten shillings in a kitty, usually sufficient to keep beer and cider flowing all evening! Returning after 54 years they found The Green Man still thriving having been bought jointly by local villagers.

Sallie and Mike knew their return visit to Duxford would be memorable but it exceeded their expectations. Displays and aircraft exhibited was remarkable, with much left to see on future visits. Carl took them into Air Traffic Control which brought back so many memories for Sallie who was much amused by the fact the Ladies toilet had remained exactly the same as it was originally! Having joined the Old Dux Association, the members list includes many names from Mike and Sallie's time at Duxford. They look forward to sharing memories and laughs with many.

After their marriage in August 1961, which pretty much coincided with the closure of Duxford operationally, they lived in Cambridge, Mike remaining with 64 squadron at Waterbeach. In May 1962 he was posted to Cyprus - the accompanied posting he had requested. They lived there for three years and this was where their two children were born. Mike left the RAF in 1968 to join British Airways where he remained for over thirty years until retiring with Sallie to The Cotswolds

*I'm sure that quite a few members will remember Mike and Sallie, as the present register shows a larger number from the 1955 – 60 era than that of mine - 1952 – 55.....  
Let's hear from you ! (ed.)*

## Welcome also to our new Associate Member Don Davis who writes :

In 1955, I was an Air Cadet of 162F ATC Squadron in Stockport, a town of 'dark, satanic mills'. Summer Camp that year was at RAF Duxford, a place of 'slumberous green fields'. One particular afternoon from that camp still resonates in my memory. A few of us were lounging on the grass on the airfield. It was a hot day and the aroma of aviation fuel was competing with the fragrance of hot tea and sticky buns from a nearby NAAFI van. Eventually it was my turn to clamber into the cockpit of the Percival Prentice for my allocated 20 minutes of 'air experience'. The RAF was the life for me!

It wasn't all lounging around on the airfield and emulating 'Biggles'. We were accommodated in one of the H blocks and I recall at least two 'bull nights' during our stay. Another memory was marching across the road to the airfield twice a day; there didn't seem to be that much traffic then! We visited a number of flights and sections, all of which gave us a positive impression of life in the RAF.

So it was thanks to my two weeks at RAF Duxford that I finally made up my mind to enlist. I joined as a Supplier at the Administrative Apprentice Training School at RAF Hereford in September 1956. I was never posted to Duxford but did serve in Australia, Aden, Cyprus and Germany. Having reached the rank of Warrant Officer by 39, I had the operations of "Plum into Mouth" & "Brain Removal"; regrettably, only the latter was successful!

I retired as a Squadron Leader in 1996 and then had a number of contracting jobs, a number of which meant that I drove past Duxford on a daily basis. As I passed, I was frequently reminded of where it all began. Thank you Duxford!



Those of you who knew Grp/Cptn Pinfold when he was C.O. at Duxford will be pleased to know that Jim Garlinge met him recently at his home in Fowey, Cornwall and that he and his wife, who are in their eighties, are both well and wish the Old Dux every success. He has a medical problem with the muscles in his feet which causes him to fall over, as he puts it " Even when I'm sober This makes travelling difficult but he still hopes to attend one of our meetings in the future. He has the distinction of being C.O. of Duxford on two occasions. 1948-50 and 1956-58 after which he retired from the RAF. and following a varied business career in civvy street he finally retired in 1974. His successor as C.O. of Duxford was Norman Ryder who we have just learned. passed away recently at his home in Arizona USA.

The following tale was submitted by Ian Swindale who has his own memories of the man

One day I was putting years of study of anatomy and exercise physiology to use in marking out the rugby pitch when I was aware of the presence of the Station Commander who frequently strolled across the sports field on his way from his .quarter to SHQ. Bringing my wellies (ever sartorial our branch) together with a 'squish of white lining liquid and wishing I had not slipped my beret into the epaulets of my denims, tried my best at a non conformist. but duly deferential PTI-without-head-dress-salute Returning my salutary shuffle with a smart regulation greeting of the required format, Group Captain E.N Ryder DFC asked as he frequently did when we met in the field.' Hello Swin. How are things"" Just my chance I thought, now's the time to plead my case " Well Sir" I started 'I can't get the aircrew to take dinghy drill seriously. Any chance we could use the local gravel pit or take a trip to Norfolk to show them how even in summer the cold water can affect their ability to operate their survival equipment I can get in my dinghy in 13 seconds, but they lark about as though they are on holiday I can't simulate the rigours and urgency of the North Sea in a Saffron Walden swimming bath "

"Well Swin." he sighed with a wistful look "I m sure that, should the occasion arise they will remember all you've taught them and circumstances will galvanise them into action but with all their training aircrew are expensive animals so we wouldn't want to lose any in some Cambridgeshire gravel pit would we ?, and think of all that paperwork! "

I knew that our very popular Station Commander was piloting the first Spitfire to be shot down in the Battle of Britain but I knew little else of the event, so I bought the book entitled "So Few- The Immortal Record of the RAF " written by David Masters in 1942..

*A Tribute to Norman Ryder will follow in the next Issue*

### Miss Demeanour

Jonathon Whaley visited our recruitment stand at the last Flying Legends Air Show. He was with friends and had not come to join us but to talk animatedly about technicalities of the 65Sqn Hunter parked where our stand is always situated, manned as ever by Jim Garlinge, Les Millgate, John Blake and A.N.Other

Jonathon is a display pilot as well as being M.D. of Heritage Aviation Developments Ltd and had acquired a single seat ex-Swiss Air Force Hunter J-4104. The aircraft was up-graded and transformed by her current paint scheme and named.



**Miss Demeanour**

Regarding the colour scheme, in answer to the most common question he is asked, "no, I wasn't on anything at the time!" As far back as his own military flying days he has been envious of the American attitude to paint schemes on military and ex-military aircraft. So in these days of political correctness, he thought it would make a change to see a Hunter painted as an art form. A celebration of one of the few aircraft that fall into that category of aircraft that somehow "look right" and, from its looks you know that they fly right too. In the Hunter's case, it flies even better than it looks.

"Custom motorbikes use a similar approach, some bikes are made for customisation some are not. By this time I had, if you'll excuse the pun, an ember of an idea that flames were going to form part of the scheme and this progressed to something based around a Space Shuttle re-entry. Using Corel Draw, I began playing around with some ideas based on the flames, smoke and re-entry, as for the stars they indicate positions of the major stars of the three signs present in my family."

The work took four nerve wracking weeks and was finally rolled out on the first week of January 1999 looking perfect. *Read the full story with superb photographs and videos at [www.HeritageAviation.com](http://www.HeritageAviation.com)*

*THE COMMITTEE SEND  
THEIR SINCERE GOOD WISHES TO ALL  
FOR A MERRY CHRISTMAS*



*AND A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR*

**Book Review.**

**Blue Man Falling by Frank Barnard.**

This fictional book, based on fact, encompasses the 'Phoney War' in September 1939/1940 an often neglected period of World War 2. The story deals with the experiences and exploits of a Fighter squadron, during that time and their eventual return to British shores from France after the fall of that country. The two main characters are pilots from completely different backgrounds and their various adventures, both on the ground and in the air. The book, in my opinion, is written by a master story teller, particularly his descriptions of air combat. My interest was retained throughout its 585 pages.

**Terence Crowley.**

ISBN 0-7505-2608-4 & ISBN 978-0-7505-2608-1. First published 2005. Published in large print 2006 by arrangement with Headline Book Publishing.



At Duxford's Remembrance Day Ann Brinkley one of our founder members was reminiscing with friends about her young life in Birkenhead. She was aged about fifteen at the time and had arranged to meet someone at Liverpool Railway Station. Ann was waiting on a location in Lime Street when she was almost knocked down by a woman who screamed, "Hey bitch, what are you doing on my pitch!"

At that tender age I suspect that Ann would not have been fully aware of what was going on, however, she did eventually make the right move when she joined the WRAF.... well it did keep her off the streets.

**Crisis in the Middle East - Military Alert**

"The English are feeling the pinch in relation to recent events in Syria and have therefore raised their security level from "Miffed" to "Peeved." Soon, though, security levels may be raised yet again to "Irritated" or even "A Bit Cross." The English have not been "A Bit Cross" since the blitz in 1940 when tea supplies nearly ran out. Terrorists have been re-categorized from "Tiresome" to "A Bloody Nuisance." The last time the British issued a "Bloody Nuisance" warning level was in 1588, when threatened by the Spanish Armada.

The Scots have raised their threat level from "Pissed Off" to "Let's get the Bastards." They don't have any other levels. This is the reason they have been used on the front line of the British army for the last 300 years

"Italy has increased the alert level from "Shout Loudly and Excitedly" to "Elaborate Military Posturing." Two more levels remain: "Ineffective Combat Operations" and "Change Sides.

Belgians, on the other hand, are all on holiday as usual; the only threat they are worried about is NATO pulling out of Brussels

The Spanish are all excited to see their new submarines ready to deploy. These beautifully designed subs have glass bottoms so the new Spanish navy can get a really good look at the old Spanish navy.

Australia, meanwhile, has raised its security level from "No worries" to "She'll be alright, Mate." Two more escalation levels remain: "Crikey! I think we'll need to cancel the barbie this weekend!" and "The barbie is cancelled." So far no situation has ever warranted use of the last final escalation level.

**(Our first ever) Word Puzzle From Oz**

Compiled by Richard Fry

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X C R E Q L B X T O P L N G T
E E G N I L R A G M I J L D H
L A O X Y G E N O R F R O G A
A Y M C S T S E P A G B S U N
R S L D E O N A D L I O A A G
R A O P R A J P L U R W N R A
Y E T P G S D P E G E S N D R
C D I E E T E U I E N E E R S
R N N R A S Y R F R N R G O Y
O A G B N S P R R N I S A O S
S T R Y T C E N I C D F N M N
S S R S S S Z L A R A S G S O
S A T T E N T I O N N T E E S
E E T D N U O R G E D A R A P
E O G E R T P I R C S N O C J
T R D O R A M I N E O R T T R
A O L A S R E P S I D A E N N
A O E B I S N D U X F O R D G
Y R P L S L A R O P R O C P E
E S U B S C R I P T I O N S A
    
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**WORD LIST**

ATTENTION	DUXFORD	AIRFIELD
DINNER	LARRYCROSS	TOASTS
CORPORALS	OXYGEN	ANNEGANGE
ATEASE	CONSCRIPT	PARADEGROUND
GUARDROOM	JIMGARLINGE	SUBSCRIPTIONS
REGULAR	BOWSER	HANGARS
DISPERSAL	SERGEANTS	STANDEASY

Apple Computers have announced that it has developed a computer chip that can store and play high fidelity music in women's breast implants. The iTIT will cost between £399 to £599 depend - ing on speaker size. This is considered a major breakthrough because, ....Women have always complained about men staring at their breasts and not listening to them.





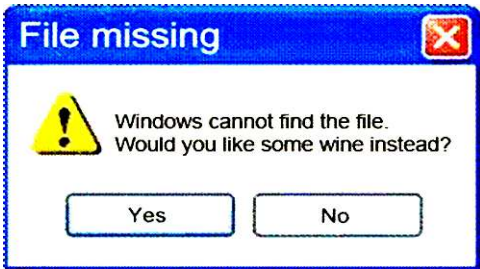
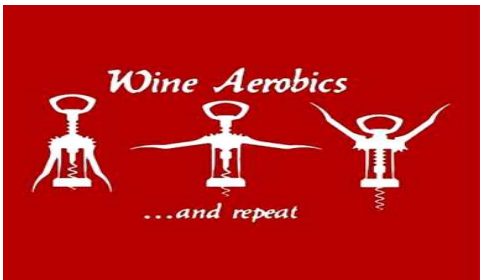
### A crusty old Flight Sergeant

found himself at a Christmas party hosted by the local liberal arts College. There was no shortage of lovely young ladies, one of whom approached the Flight Sergeant for conversation "Excuse me, Flight Sergeant, but you seem to be rather serious, is there something wrong?" "No, ma'am., just serious by nature." The young lady eyed his decorations and said, "It looks like you have seen a lot of action. "Yes ma am, a lot of action." The young lady tiring of trying to start up a conversation, said, "You know, you should lighten up a little. relax and enjoy yourself". The Flight Sergeant just stared at her in his serious way. Finally the young lady said, " I hope you don't take this the wrong way, but when was the last time you had sex?" "1955, ma'am." "Well, there you are, you need to chill out and stop taking everything so seriously, I mean, no sex since 1955." She took his hand and led him to a room where she proceeded to "relax" him a few times. Afterwards, panting for breath, she leaned against his chest, ... "Wow, you certainly didn't forget much since 1955!" The Flight Sergeant, glancing at his watch, said in his matter-of-fact voice, "I hope not ma'am since it's now only 21.30."

Submitted by Bob Scott

FESTIVE THOUGHTS ON WINE from Mr. Swin

COMPILED BY RICHARD FRY



### Stone Age Wine Pairings



Simple rule of thumb: if it tries to eat us serve red if it runs away serve white:



We thought it was a couple of the lads 'aving a laugh Sir - but this one's beard didn't come off when we pulled it and we can't understand a word he sez. Someone said that the little one works in ASF, but I doubt it!

The three stages of life:

- 1) You believe in Santa Claus
- 2) You don't believe in Santa Claus
- 3) You are Santa Claus